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FM AMEMBASSY RIYADH  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2341

UNCLAS RIYADH 005382

S/CT FOR REAP

E.O.12356: N/A

TAGS: PTER SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI ARABIA: 1995 ANNUAL TERRORISM REPORT

REF: STATE 245276

11. THE FOLLOWING ARE KEYED TO POINTS IN REFTEL.

1A. (U) IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE NOVEMBER 13 BOMBING OF THE RIYADH HEADQUARTERS OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT, SAUDI ARABIAN NATIONAL GUARD (OPM/SANG), WHICH KILLED SEVEN PERSONS, INCLUDING FIVE AMERICANS, AND INJURED MORE THAN FORTY OTHERS, THE SAG LAUNCHED AN AGGRESSIVE INVESTIGATION IN FULL COOPERATION WITH THE USG. THIS INCLUDED PROVIDING COMPLETE SUPPORT TO AN FBI INVESTIGATION TEAM. INCREASED SECURITY MEASURES FOR AMERICAN FACILITIES WERE INSTITUTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF SENIOR SAUDI LEADERS, AND THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ENTERED INTO A DEEPER DIALOGUE ON COUNTERTERRORISM MEASURES IN GENERAL. THE INVESTIGATION CONTINUES APACE. THERE WERE NO OTHER ACTS OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM OR SIGNIFICANT ACTS OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM, BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE DEFINITION, IN SAUDI ARABIA THIS YEAR, AND NO CASES ARE PENDING FROM PREVIOUS YEARS.

1B. (U) THE SAG WAS NOT FORTHCOMING WHEN THE USG, ACTING ON A TIP FROM AN INFORMANT, REQUESTED SAUDI ASSISTANCE IN DETAINING A TERRORIST IDENTIFIED IN PRESS REPORTS AS HIZBALLAH SPECIAL SECURITY CHIEF IMAD MUGHNIYAH. THE LATTER WAS REPORTEDLY SCHEDULED TO MAKE A STOPOVER APRIL 7 IN JEDDAH, SAUDI ARABIA, EN ROUTE FROM KHARTOUM TO BEIRUT. THE USG REQUESTED THAT THE SAUDIS ARREST MUGHNIYAH UPON ARRIVAL IN JEDDAH AND TURN HIM OVER TO OFFICIALS FOR TRANSPORT TO THE UNITED STATES TO STAND TRIAL FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE HIJACKING OF TWA FLIGHT 847 IN 11985. THE SAG REFUSED THE PLANE PERMISSION TO LAND IN SAUDI ARABIA.

1C. (U) THERE ARE NO LEGAL OR POLITICAL IMPEDIMENTS TO SAG PROSECUTION OF PERSONS COMMITTING TERRORIST ACTS WITHIN SAUDI ARABIA. NO FORMAL EXTRADITION TREATIES EXIST BETWEEN SAUDI ARABIA AND MOST OTHER COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE UNITED STATES.

1D. (U) SAUDI LEADERS AT EVERY LEVEL--INCLUDING KING FAHD, CROWN PRINCE ABDULLAH, AND CABINET MINISTERS--ISSUED FORCEFUL STATEMENTS CONDEMNING THE NOVEMBER 13 OPM/SANG BOMBING AND ITS PERPETRATORS. OFFICIAL MEDIA CARRIED EXTENSIVE REPORTS OF CONDEMNATION OF THE ATTACK ON U.S. FACILITIES ISSUED BY PUBLIC, RELIGIOUS, AND PRIVATE GROUPS. THE MEDIA WERE SIMILARLY DEPLOYED TO PUBLICIZE SAG COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES IN INVESTIGATING THE BOMBING AND TO APPEAL FOR PUBLIC ASSISTANCE IN IDENTIFYING THE PERPETRATORS.

-- IN JULY, THE SAG RELEASED A PUBLIC STATEMENT CONDEMNING THE KIDNAPPINGS OF THE FIVE WESTERNERS IN KASHMIR AS COUNTER TO THE TENETS OF ISLAM AND CALLED FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES, AS DID SENIOR SAUDI RELIGIOUS LEADERS UPON THE URGING OF THE SAG. IN NOVEMBER, THE SAG JOINED IN CONDEMNING THE ASSASSINATION OF YITZHAK RABIN AND THE BOMBING OF THE EGYPTIAN EMBASSY IN ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN.

1E. (U) THE SAG UNDERTOOK NO MAJOR COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS IN 1995. HOWEVER, THE SAG DID CONDUCT A MAJOR INVESTIGATION OF THE OPM/SANG BOMBING AND PROVIDED OUTSTANDING SUPPORT TO THE USG'S OWN INVESTIGATION OF THE ATTACK.

1F. (U) THE SAG OFFICIALLY DENIES IT FINANCIALLY SUPPORTS INTERNATIONAL TERRORIST GROUPS OR ACTIVITIES, AND SINCE APRIL 1993 SAUDI REGULATIONS HAVE REQUIRED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGOS) AND PRIVATE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES COLLECTING CONTRIBUTIONS FOR DOMESTIC OR INTERNATIONAL CAUSES TO OBTAIN FORMAL SAG AUTHORIZATION. THERE CONTINUE TO BE UNCONFIRMED

REPORTS OF FINANCIAL TIES BETWEEN TERRORIST GROUPS AND SOME PRIVATE SAUDI-BASED NGOS.

1G. (U) THE SAG DID NOT MAKE PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN SUPPORT OF ANY OF THE SEVEN COUNTRIES CURRENTLY ON THE USG'S SO-CALLED "TERRORISM LIST" ON A TERRORISM ISSUE. ON APRIL 20, THE SAG ALLOWED A LIBYAN AIRLINES JET CARRYING LIBYAN HAJJ PILGRIMS TO LAND AT JEDDAH'S INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, BE SERVICED, AND DEPART IN VIOLATION OF UNSC SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON LIBYA BECAUSE OF ITS INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO THE FLIGHT, MINISTER OF INTERIOR PRINCE NAIF HAD COMMENTED PUBLICLY THAT ALL PILGRIMS WITH VALID HAJJ VISAS WOULD BE RECEIVED BY SAUDI ARABIA, REGARDLESS OF THEIR MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION.

1H. (U) THE UNSOLVED NOVEMBER 13 BOMBING OF THE OPM/SANG HEADQUARTERS IN RIYADH HAS GREATLY HEIGHTENED SAG CONCERNS ABOUT THE THREAT OF DOMESTIC TERRORISM. THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT ALSO DOES NOT RULE OUT THE POTENTIAL FOR FOREIGN-SPONSORED INCIDENTS, INCLUDING DURING HAJJ. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THERE MAY ALSO EXIST OFFICIAL CONCERN THAT THE WAR IN AFGHANISTAN ATTRACTED SAUDI AND OTHER PARTICIPANTS WHO RECEIVED TRAINING IN THE USE OF EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER WEAPONS. SUCH INDIVIDUALS MAY NOW ENGAGE IN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES IN THE ARAB WORLD AND ELSEWHERE, INCLUDING SAUDI ARABIA.

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